

Valiant.

Your brand audit.

A step-by-step
guide for stronger
market differentiation



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Why a brand audit?

For many organisations, a brand audit is a strategic tool to stay competitive, relevant, and differentiated in a crowded marketplace. Companies typically undertake a brand audit when facing challenges such as:

- Market homogenisation: your brand starts blending in with competitors rather than standing out
- Customer perception gaps: what you think you stand for vs. how customers actually perceive you
- Growth & expansion: entering new markets, new investment wanting results, launching new offerings or undergoing a merger
- Declining engagement & conversion: lower inbound leads, poor brand recall, or confused messaging
- Cultural misalignment: internal teams struggle to articulate or embody the brand values consistently
- Brand relevance: understanding if your brand and messaging is relevant now and for future audiences

A brand audit, when it's done well, provides clarity, direction, and actionable insights for differentiation.

Step 1.

Define the audit scope

Before diving into a full audit determine the following:

- **Goals:** are you looking to refine messaging, reposition or strengthen market perception?
- **Areas of focus:** brand strategy, visual identity, customer perception, employee alignment, etc.
- **Competitor benchmarking:** how do you compare to direct and indirect competitors?

Things to avoid:

Trying to audit everything at once – instead, focus on priority areas that will drive the biggest impact.

Step 2.

Internal brand analysis

What to evaluate:

- **Brand mission, vision & values:** do they still align with business goals and industry shifts?
- **Brand architecture:** are your products/services structured clearly for internal and external audiences?
- **Tone of voice & messaging:** is your messaging consistent, engaging and unique?
- **Employee perception:** conduct internal interviews to assess brand clarity among teams

Things to avoid:

Internal and external misalignment – if employees struggle to define your brand, customers will too.

Step 3.

External brand perception

Key methods:

- **Customer & stakeholder interviews:** gather qualitative insights from clients, partners and investors
- **Surveys & NPS scores:** quantify satisfaction, trust and brand affinity
- **Social listening & sentiment analysis:** understand how people discuss your brand online
- **Competitor analysis:** identify gaps and opportunities in positioning

Things to avoid:

Relying only on internal assumptions – what you believe your brand stands for may not match what customers experience.

Step 4.

Visual identity & digital presence audit

What to assess:

- **Website & digital assets:** UX, design consistency and messaging clarity
- **Brand guidelines & application:** our logos, colours and typography applied consistently?
- **Social media & content:** is your thought leadership positioning strong? are you engaging audiences effectively?
- **SEO & brand discoverability:** does your brand show up where it should in search results?

Things to avoid:

Focusing only on aesthetics – a visual refresh **won't** fix deeper brand clarity issues.

Step 5.

Market & competitive positioning

- **Brand differentiation check:** what makes you distinct from competitors? Where do you sit compared to your competitors mapped against key criteria?
- **Category trends & industry insights:** are you aligned with, or ahead of, market shifts?
- **Value proposition & messaging gaps:** is your proposition clear and compelling?

Things to avoid:

DON'T assume differentiation is just about features – strong brands differentiate through story, emotion, experience and their people.

Step 6.

Data analysis

- **Identify key insights:** what patterns emerge from internal and external feedback?
- **Assess brand equity strength:** is your brand an asset or a liability?
- **Prioritise gaps & opportunities:** where is the biggest impact for the least effort?

Things to avoid:

Overcomplicating the analysis – stick to clear, actionable insights rather than overwhelming data dumps.

Step 7.

Strategic recommendations and action plan

Deliver a brand audit report that includes:

- 01. Brand health scorecard:** a snapshot of brand strengths and weaknesses
- 02. Core brand messaging & positioning recommendations:** how to sharpen differentiation
- 03. Internal brand alignment strategy:** training and internal communications improvements
- 04. Visual & digital brand refresh plan:** where improvements are needed
- 05. Competitive positioning strategy:** where and how to stand out in the market
- 06. Quick wins vs. long-term strategy:** immediate fixes vs. long-term transformation

Things to avoid:

Too much theory, not enough action – the best brand audits provide clear next steps, not just insights.

Benefits of a brand audit

- ✓ **Sharper market differentiation:** clearer positioning against competitors
- ✓ **More effective marketing and sales:** messaging that resonates and converts
- ✓ **Stronger internal alignment:** teams that understand and live the brand
- ✓ **Enhanced customer perception:** a brand that is trusted, recognisable, and respected
- ✓ **Growth and scalability:** a brand fit for expansion and new opportunities

Final thought

A brand audit isn't a one-time exercise — it should be an ongoing strategic check-in. Done right, it transforms not just how your brand looks but how it **competes, resonates and wins** in the market.

This is how Valiant helps you build a stronger brand.

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